

Area 4

Interim Design Services Contract (DSC)

Asset Delivery (AD)

Scope

Annex 12

Communications

CONTENTS AMENDMENT SHEET

Amend. No.	Revision No.	Amendments	Initials	Date
1	0	Tender Issue	LP	02/03/20
2	0	Inclusion of section referencing the use of social media at section 1.4	LP	

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1 COMMUNICATIONS

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Any reference to Highways England shall be taken to mean the *Client* in the first instance.
- 1.1.2 The *Client* has an overarching communications strategy, which places emphasis on planned and targeted communications across all areas of the *Client's* work. Better, more accessible communications is a key part of putting customers first.
- 1.1.3 The strategy places a clear, consistent Highways England visual identity and “brand” as central to all publicity. This means that while the Contractor delivers the service “on the ground”, the *Client* will remain as the public face and will have control over the wording and design of all publicity material. The *Client* also publishes an annual communications plan which sets key themes and messages for the coming year. All communication activity should support these key themes which are important for building the Highways England “brand”.
- 1.1.4 Highways England Communications Group will advise the *Service Manager* and the Contractor on all communication issues. All handling of national and specialist media will be led by the national press office within the Communications Group. The *Client's* regional press officers will lead and advise on handling of regional media, with support from the Regional News Network (RNN) where appropriate. RNN support will include issuing press notices, dealing with media enquiries, managing media attendance at events, and other support as requested by the regional press officers or national press office.
- 1.1.5 Any corporate communications or publicity activity undertaken by the Contractor on behalf of the *Client* requires prior discussion with and approval from the Communications Group, before any action is undertaken by the Contractor.

1.2 Publicity, Public Relations and the Media

- 1.2.1 The Contractor deals with all queries and complaints received relating to the Affected Property in line with the *Client's* most recent policies and procedures, including the Corporate Complaints Policy and correspondence quality control guidelines as agreed by the *Client*.
- 1.2.2 The Contractor accepts the *Client's* definitions, complies with the *Client's* policies and procedures, and to timescales outlined by the *Client* in relation to customer correspondence and complaints.
- 1.2.3 The Contractor maintains a record of all correspondence and complaints and the actions taken by the Contractor in relation to them. The record is retained

by the Contractor for at least the previous six years and is available for inspection by the *Service Manager* at all reasonable times.

- 1.2.4 The Contractor provides any information that is needed to enable the *Service Manager* to prepare statements or responses to questions or issues raised by or on behalf of any member of the public or public organisation (including the United Kingdom parliament, any local authority or any member or representatives of the foregoing). The Contractor provides such information within any time periods which may be imposed by the *Service Manager* (acting reasonably having regard to the purpose of the provision of the information requested and to the nature and extent of the information requested). If it is impossible for the Contractor to do so, the Contractor immediately gives notice to the *Service Manager* setting out in full the reasons.
- 1.2.5 Where such questions or issues are raised with or addressed to the *Client* (and not with the Contractor directly), the Contractor does not communicate directly with such public organisation in respect thereof, without having obtained prior written acceptance from the *Service Manager* of the form and terms of its communications, save to the extent that he is legally required to do otherwise.
- 1.2.6 The Contractor promptly informs the *Service Manager* of any communications in connection with the subject matter of this contract and the Affected Property generally with:
- MP's or MEP's,
 - any public organisation and
 - any other third party where the matters in question might reasonably be expected by the Contractor to have political significance be in the public interest, or concern issues of policy.

The Contractor promptly provides the *Service Manager* with copies of any such communications provided in writing.

- 1.2.7 The Contractor provides to the *Service Manager* information necessary for the operation of the *Client's* information service. The *Client's* information service requires details of proposed lane closures and traffic safety and management measures.
- 1.2.8 The Contractor arranges for signs to be erected to inform users of planned road closures and or lane closures in line with Network Occupancy Requirements, including the times and dates of the closure, unless otherwise agreed by the *Service Manager*.
- 1.2.9 The Contractor makes recommendations to the *Service Manager* on publicity arrangements for any work on the Affected Property.
- 1.2.10 The Contractor informs Others affected by any work.

1.3 Media Relations

- 1.3.1 Any proposals for media contact or opportunities should be discussed and approved with the Communications Group prior to any action taken by the Contractor. The Contractor shall retain contact with the Communications Group, and RNN where instructed to do so, throughout the process.
- 1.3.2 Any publicity activity for works which are being carried out by any Contractor on behalf of the *Client* must make the client-supplier relationship clearly explicit.
- 1.3.3 The *Client* shall have the first option to issue press notices and generate other publicity about work on its behalf, for example offering media interviews or placing articles in the press. If a contract award is being announced or a new service launched, the Contractor will not release any information until the *Client* has made its own announcement to the media. If the *Client* does not wish to issue a press notice, it will discuss with the supplier and agree an appropriate media handling plan with the Contractor.
- 1.3.4 The Contractor must pass all media enquiries to the *Client's* press officers or RNN where instructed to do so, immediately, and notify the *Service Manager*. No comments or interviews are to be given to the media without prior permission from the *Service Manager*, and the *Client's* national or regional press officer.
- 1.3.5 The Contractor will inform the *Service Manager* and the *Client's* national press office or regional press officer as soon as possible about any possible reactive or proactive media opportunities that include, but are not limited to, sensitive issues that may attract media interest. All communication strategies and plans developed by the Contractor must be agreed in consultation with Highways England's Communications Group and the *Service Manager* prior to any activities being undertaken.
- 1.3.6 The Contractor shall assist the *Client's* press officers (and where instructed RNN) with information to enable advance notice to be given to the media and stakeholders that specifies the impact upon the road user to benefit the *Client's* customers; this includes providing detail on programme dates, times of operation, proposed lane closures, traffic safety and management measures, and alternative routes. The Contractor shall take all necessary action to ensure that drivers and other road users are aware of the road works or closures before commencing their journeys. The Contractor must consult with the *Client's* press officers who will advise on these issues. Where applicable, the Contractor must expand on the programme of activity.
- 1.3.7 The *Client's* national or regional press officers (or RNN as commissioned by them) are responsible for arranging any visits to any location within the area network by journalists, photographers or film crews. All arrangements for all

facilities, attendees and the like, are the responsibility of the Contractor. Exact and detailed requirements will be provided by the *Service Manager*.

- 1.3.8 For media interviews in connection with the *Client's* projects, any spokespeople for the Contractor shall refer to themselves as speaking on behalf of the *Client*. Use of the Contractor's spokespeople will be limited to operational matters where the *Client's* staff are unavailable. The *Client's* staff will conduct interviews that may involve policy issues.

1.4 **Social Media**

- 1.4.1 The Contractor adheres to the *Client's* Social Media Policy see link in Annex 3, when undertaking any social media activities on behalf of the *Client*, or in relation to the *service*.
- 1.4.2 The *Client* uses its own social media channels to promote work undertaken on its behalf by the Contractor. The Contractor must not set up any social media channels on behalf of the *Client*.
- 1.4.3 Where the Contractor requires the use of social media to communicate on behalf of the *Client*, and/or in relation to the *service*, the Contractor must seek prior approval from the *Client*.
- 1.4.4 The Contractor seeks written approval from the *Client* prior to undertaking any social media activity, in association with or, on behalf of the *Client* or the *service*, via its own social media channels.
- 1.4.5 The *Contractor* is to maintain regular and open communication with the *Client* where instructed to do so through the lifetime of the contract.
- 1.4.6 The Contractor must make the *Client-Contractor* relationship explicit when undertaking social media activity on behalf of the *Client* or in relation to the *service*.
- 1.4.7 The Contractor does not release any information on social media in relation to the award of a contract and/or the commencement of the new *service*, until the *Client* has made its own announcement via its own approved media channels. The *Client* reserves the right to decline any posts, by the Contractor, on social media.
- 1.4.8 The Contractor must not respond to any customers enquiries about, or on behalf of, the *Client* via its own social media channels, unless otherwise agreed with the *Client*. The Contractor passes all social media enquiries to the *Client*, immediately.
- 1.4.9 The Contractor takes all necessary action to notify the *Client* where roadworks will impact on the road user, enabling the *Client* to effectively communicate this information via its own social media channel.

1.5 Community Relations

- 1.5.1 The *Service Manager*, on advice from Highways England's Communications Group (or where agreed RNN) will approve the text for all newsletters, information materials and significant correspondence being issued to community groups or individuals. At the same time the *Service Manager* and Contractor must observe any spending or operational restrictions that apply to this, and any other communications, marketing and publicity activities, in force at that time.
- 1.5.2 The Contractor must keep the *Client's* regional press officer (or where instructed RNN) and the *Service Manager* informed of any significant community issues.
- 1.5.3 The Contractor shall inform the *Service Manager* about any public meetings being held to discuss area network issues.
- 1.5.4 The Contractor shall liaise with the *Service Manager* before accepting any invitations to appear at public meetings or events related to the area network.

1.6 Branding, Marketing, and Publicity

- 1.6.1 The Contractor must ensure that they conform to the *Client's* visual identity and branding policy and technical specifications, including for the preparation and production of all information and communications materials including signs and works signage. These are set out in '*The Highways England visual identity guidelines*'; this document is referenced in Annex 3 and further information is available from the local Highways England media services teams. All material must be approved by the *Service Manager*. When drafting text the Contractor must also follow the *Client's* specifications as set out in '*Highways England tone of voice and style guide*' – also available via the local Highways England media services teams.
- 1.6.2 All dedicated operations vehicles must be branded correctly using the *Client's* visual identity specifications and branding only. The requirements for suppliers are outlined in the publication setting out Highways England's visual identity guidelines as required at 1.4.1.
- 1.6.3 Branding requirements also apply to letters, emails, personal protection equipment, PowerPoint presentations, leaflets, newsletters, statutory notices and all other materials. For a full list of where supplier logos can and cannot be used, refer to the *Client's* visual identity specifications document. The *Client's* branding must be present on all scheme-related materials.
- 1.6.4 Design issues are the responsibility of the *Client's* media services team. The Contractor shall seek, follow and implement this advice. The contact details for each Highways England media services team can be found in the documentation setting out the *Client's* visual identity specifications.
- 1.6.5 The Contractor shall assist the *Service Manager* with regular information updates for the *Client's* website. All text must be cleared before issue to

ensure efficient co-ordination of publicity and communications efforts. All material relating to Schemes on the *Contractor's* or other external websites (i.e. non-*Client* websites) must make clear the relationship of the *Client* to Schemes and that the supplier is working on behalf of the *Client* on the Scheme, or that the Scheme is funded by the *Client*.

1.6.6 The Contractor shall not set up independent websites or develop independent logos or branding for the *Client's* Schemes or projects.

1.6.7 The Contractor will undertake such information and communications activity commensurate with major closures as agreed, while observing any spending or operational restrictions in force at that time. Within any such constraints the Contractor must take all necessary action to ensure that drivers and other stakeholders are aware of the closure before commencing their journeys. The Contractor will agree the extent of such communication and publicity with the *Service Manager* and Highways England Communications Group through the development of agreed scheme communication plans. Wherever possible these plans must make use of pre-approved existing material that has been produced (e.g. DfT-produced safety resources).

1.6.8 Any requests for communications or marketing activity raised by the *Client's* area or project teams, or the *Service Manager*, should be referred by the Contractor to their Highways England regional press officer or Highways England Communications Group representative for approval in the first instance.

1.7 **General**

1.7.1 Media and community liaison issues will be an agenda item at the monthly review meetings. Whenever key milestones and/or proposed changes to the communications plan are to be discussed the meetings should include the *Client's* regional press officers.

1.7.2 The Contractor shall include a section on communications in its monthly report to the *Service Manager*. This includes a review of all proactive and reactive media contact (and coverage where known), any agreed publicity and advertising, and community liaison work. The Contractor is not required to purchase a media monitoring or cuttings service in order to prepare the monthly report or as part of this contract.

1.7.3 The Contractor shall work with the *Service Manager* with advice from the *Client's* regional press officers to create an area communication plan. The objectives and outcomes of the plan will be set by the *Client*. In drawing up the plan, the Contractor and the *Service Manager* will identify the key groups of customers and interested parties they need to communicate with. The Contractor and *Service Manager* will ensure these groups have the information they need in a way, and at a time, that suits their needs using agreed communications channels. They will ensure that customers have the

opportunity to have their say and feedback to them on what the *Client* is doing as a result.

1.7.4 The Highways England Communications Group will provide the following:

- advice on media handling issues,
- response to national media enquiries,
- advice on area communication plans,
- media handling for events and ministerial visits,
- media handling for negative/crisis issues,
- draft statements where required,
- “Lines to take” to be updated throughout the contract period,
- contributions to customer and community communications if required and
- advice on communications, marketing and publicity (e.g. advance notice of traffic management) compliant with any spending constraints in place at the time.

1.7.5 Highways England’s Communications Group (and RNN where instructed) will require the following:

- regular liaison with the Contractor and the Service Manager,
- the setting up of a communications group to meet on a regular basis to discuss public relations and community liaison issues,
- a basic fact sheet and route map to be available for issue to the media as required,
- a commitment to regular and open communication with any website team.